NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

WEEKLY STAFF NEWSLETTER
May 15, 1998

Did the dinosaurs break the sound barrier?

SUPERSONIC DINOSAURS

An evening with **Nathan Myhrvold**, chief technology officer for Microsoft
Tuesday, May 19, 1998 at 6:00 p.m. at The Field Museum

A block of free tickets is being held for staff and volunteers – first come, first served. You are welcome to a ticket for yourself and for one guest (two complimentary tickets per staff member or volunteer). You may purchase tickets for any additional guests you would like to bring. Please contact **Sandra Blake** (x854) in the Education Department for your ticket.

Congratulations to all staff who won awards at this year's American Association of Museums conference. Details of the awards will be printed next week.

SUE NEWS

A new "on-exhibit" fossil preparation laboratory is almost complete on the grounds of Animal Kingdom, Disney's newest theme park at Disney World, Orlando, Florida. **John McCarter** dedicated the new lab on April 22 as part of a national press event marking the opening of Disney's new park. **Bruce Schumacher** and **Bill Simpson** were on hand to inspect the new facility and to answer questions. **Pat Kremer** organized the dedication ceremony and was on hand to handle last minute details John also announced the kick-off of a multi-year "Colossal Fossil"education program, sponsored by McDonald's. As part of this program,McDonald's has already distributed 60,000 copies of a educational curriculum about the Field Museum's *Tyrannosaurus rex,* Sue, to third, fourth and fifth grade teachers across the country. Each educator's package includes a video highlighting Field Museum research, a full-color classroom poster, and reproducible activity sheets.. McDonalds also sponsored Dinoland USA, the portion of Animal Kingdom where the lab facility is located. John and Bill then spent the rest of the day giving interviews to a variety of different media groups present for the event.

Lead preparator Bruce Schumacher and his colleagues **Joanne Avery and Casey Holliday** will staff the new preparation facility. They will be in Orlando until the end of the project and will prepare the massive hind legs and tail of SUE. The lab is a separate building approximately twenty-five feet square, and was designed by Disney and Field Museum Exhibits staff headed up by **Julie Thomas.** The lab's interior was planned with Bill Simpson's guidance, and is similar to the newly renovated Department of Geology laboratories and to the new McDonalds laboratory being built adjacent to "Life Over Time." The similarities include an extensive ventilation system (designed by Monona Rossol and her engineer, David Gordon) for the health and safety of the SUE prep crew. Julie's team of **Peter Stevenson** and **Jason Grant** designed the exhibitory for the new lab.

During March, Bruce Schemata and **Peter Laraba** of Education exhibited select bones from SUE at the 1998 McDonalds Owner/Operator convention in Orlando, Florida. Bruce and Peter explained Field Museum's *Tyrannosaurus rex* project and McDonald's involvement. In addition, Bruce did preparation work on the massive left lower leg bones. The exhibit was seen and very well received by many of the 15,000 attendees. Since bones needed to be sent to Orlando for this event, the rest of the hind limbs and tail, bound for the prep lab in Dinoland, were shipped at the same time, as well as equipment and exhibitry for the new lab. Bruce oversaw this transfer and all the specimens are now safely installed in Disney's secure specimen vault awaiting the opening of the new lab in the next few weeks.

NEW EXPLORERS TO FEATURE FLYNN'S ANDES EXPEDITION

The May 21 installment of *The New Explorers with Bill Kurtis* on the A&E network features some of The Field Museum's own explorers. "Mystery of the Andes" focuses on **John Flynn's** field work and research on the fossils and geologic history of the Chilean Andes. Kurtis' production team tracked John Flynn and **Bill Simpson** of Geology on a 1997 expedition to the Chilean Andes as they and colleagues from the University of Chile, and the National Museum of Chile, braved the rugged slopes of an unexplored region of the Andes in search of fossil evidence of the unique animals that inhabited South America millions of years ago. With the results of this and previous expeditions, Flynn and his colleagues are revising the scientific thinking on the age of the Andes and the processes of their formation. Among the mysteries explored by the research, and the *New Explorers* segment, is the evolution and geographic origin of major groups of South American animals like monkeys and rodents, which appear to have an African (rather than North American) ancestry, suggesting over-ocean dispersal across the Atlantic about forty million years ago.

GRANDE AND BEMIS AMIID VOLUME RELEASED

April saw the long-awaited publication of a new book by **Lance Grande** (Geology) and **William E. Bemis** (research associate, Geology). *A Comprehensive Phylogenetic Study of amiid Fishes (Amiidae) based on Comparative Skeletal Anatomy: An Empirical Search for Interconnected Patterns of Natural History,* from the Society of Vertebrate

FIELD MUSEUM FAN MAIL

I am writing to thank you and commend you for an exceptional member of your team. During a visit last Sunday, **Ms. Carrie Woods** went above and beyond the call of duty to serve our family.

While visiting, my wife strained her back lifting my daughter. With two preschool children and my wife incapacitated in the building and my car in the far lot, I knew I needed help. Ms. Woods … brought a wheel chair to my wife and escorted my wife and children to the handicapped entrance. This allowed me to walk to my car (in the far parking lot) and bring it around to pick up my wife and children. Ms. Woods exhibited … client centered initiative … I am very grateful for Ms. Woods' help and for your having such wonderful associates on your team.

PLANNING TO GO OUT OF TOWN?
THE 1998 ILLINOIS HOTEL-MOTEL DIRECTORY CAN HELP YOU!

The 1998 Illinois Hotel-Motel directory is now available in the Human Resources Department. This directory, published by the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois, is a comprehensive resource of information on hotels and motels in Illinois.

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF DIRECTORY

The revised Museum Staff Directory is now available in the Human Resources Department.

A NEW DATE TO CELEBRATE ON STATE **May 26 – 30, from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m**

Celebrate on State Street, Chicago's popular arts, crafts, food and entertainment fest, usually scheduled in mid-June, will add an additional day and move to a new time this year: May 26-30, 1998. Thus it will coincide in part with the Travel Industry Association of America's prestigious International Pow Wow Convention, meeting in Chicago May 23-27, 1998. Pow Wow is a coming together of over 6,000 travel industry professionals from all over the world. Chicago stands to benefit an estimated $300 million long-term from hosting Pow Wow. Questions? Call Belinda Reeves 782-9160.

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. Please submit articles by Tuesday at noon, via Email or on floppy disk, in WordPerfect or MSWord. Printed on recycled paper.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – May 15, 1998

In preparation for the "re-opening of The Field Museum in conjunction with the opening of the Museum Campus, many improvements are being made in the public areas. Below is a summary of the status of some of them. If you want more detail or have further questions, please call the "contact" department.

Project	Contact Department	Status	Scheduled Completion
Grainger Hall	Exhibits	Construction & Installation	19-May
Hall 10 (North-west Coast)	Exhibits	Design & preliminary restoration	29-May
McDonald's Geology Prep Lab	Exhibits	Construction completed	June opening
Corner Bakery Bread exhibit	Aux. Services FP&O Exhibits	Demolition/ Construction Design	Early July End July
North entrance for Corner Bakery	FP&O	Design	Summer 1998
Museum Store	Aux. Services FP&O	Construction	23-May
McDonald's Renovation/Terrace	Aux. Services FP&O	Design/ review	Summer 1998
Washroom (McDonald's) Renovation	FP&O	Construction	22-May
South Entrance	FP&O	Design review -- construction to begin by Labor Day	Sep-98

WATER PROBLEMS

Last week the Museum experienced some problems with its water supply when construction on the new Museum store resulted in the failure of a backflow valve, which caused water from the cooling system to flow into the regular water supply. Work was begun to correct the problem as soon as it was detected. The system was flushed, and the water was tested thoroughly before it was declared fit to drink again. **John Mazza**

PHONE PROBLEMS

Over the last ten days, the Museum has experienced various problems with the phone system. Early problems were due to fluctuations in the power supply due to the hook-up of the new emergency power generator. The problems this week were due primarily to the failure of an old "line conditioner" which had reached the end of its product life. Repair and diagnostic work continues.

Anita Purnell in Visitor Services (x386) will now handle phone requests and problems. Our thanks to **Monique Proctor** in FP&O, who shouldered this burden previously.

LIVING COLORS: A BUTTERFLY GARDEN

MAY 23 - SEPTEMBER 7, 1998

FACT SHEET

The Field Museum will present an amazing outdoor walk-through garden filled with live butterflies and moths in every stage of development. This exhibition will give visitors a rare opportunity to encounter hundreds of butterflies and moths in a spectacular outdoor setting. The exhibition will highlight environmental issues and will contain species indigenous to the Midwest.

As you follow the path through the garden, you'll pass through three typical Midwest habitats: a prairie with grasslands, pond, and a stream; a woodland with trees and a waterfall; and a typical backyard garden. Thirty-three butterfly and five moth species will feed on native plants in each ecosystem. A species identification guide will be provided, so that you will have the ability to mark each species that you see living in the garden.

In the backyard garden area, there is a special "emerging tree.". Here you'll find butterflies in the making: the pupa stage, or chrysalis. Inside the chrysalis, the pupa -- formerly a caterpillar -- is metamorphosing, changing its structure to become an adult butterfly. Each week, new pupae will be added to the emerging tree, so that there will always be an opportunity to witness the emergence of a new butterfly or moth. When the wings are dry and hardened, it will take flight, looking for its first meal and an opportunity to reproduce.

Beyond the garden is an interpretive area with drawings, photos, and interactive displays. Topics include:

- Amazing Bodies
- Life Cycle
- Flight
- Feeding
- Camouflage and Mimicry
- Conservation

When you're done, walk back through the garden and put your knowledge to work making new discoveries.

Living Colors: A Butterfly Garden was developed by *Spineless Wonders* in conjunction with The Field Museum. Questions? Call **Mia Schillace** (x513).

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